

912

UNITED EMPIRE LOYALISTS
— OF —
THE COUNTY OF DUNDAS, ONTARIO.

BY
ALEXANDER CLARK CASSELMAN,
TORONTO.

READ BEFORE
THE UNITED EMPIRE LOYALISTS' ASSOCIATION
OF ONTARIO, AT TORONTO.
1900

Rev. W. C. Raymond M.A.

Compliments of

A. C. Casselman

**The German U.E. Loyalists of the County of Dundas,
Ontario.—Part I.**

BY ALEXANDER CLARK CASSELMAN, TORONTO. *A.D. 1900.*

On both banks of the Rhine where it is joined by the Neckar, is a large district about 3,500 square miles in extent, that from the Middle Ages to the beginning of this century was known as the Palatinate, and whose people were called Palatines. Its capital was Heidelberg, and within its borders were the cities of Mayence, Spires, Mannheim and Worms, all names famous in history.

Situated as this Garden of Europe was, near to Wittenburg and Geneva, its inhabitants soon embraced the Reformed faith. Some became followers of Calvin, and some of Luther. The Electors or rulers of the Palatinate for many years were Protestants, but in 1690, the Elector, John William, a devoted adherent of the Roman Church, tried to bring his people back to the old faith.

From its position the Palatinate became both the cause and the theatre of that long war between Louis XIV. of France and nearly the rest of Europe. Louis wished to fulfil the desire and dream of every French ruler,—to make the Rhine the eastern boundary of France. Turenne, Louis' general, laid waste the Palatinate to the west bank of the Rhine. Two Electors, unable to bear such oppression, died of broken hearts. Louis claimed the Palatinate for his brother Philip. The League of Augsburg was formed against him, the soul of the combination being William, Prince of Orange. In this war Louis' generals again overran the Palatinate to chastise its people for receiving kindly the French Protestants who left France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. General Montclas, accordingly, gave the people three days to leave their homes. The villages and towns were burned, the castles and churches destroyed, the ashes of the Emperors in the tombs at Spires were scattered to the winds. Many of the people perished of hunger, but as Macaulay says, "Enough survived to fill the towns of Europe with beggars who had once been prosperous shopkeepers and farmers." The ruins, softened by time, still remain as reminders of Louis' wrath, and as a warning to France that a United Germany shall never permit the like to occur again.

This blow, although hard for the Palatines to bear, was really the means of their deliverance. For while Louis was thus seeking a personal vengeance, William had become firmly seated on the throne of England; and thus he brought in opposition to France the power that was to emancipate Europe, destroy the

fleets of France and drive her armies from every continent. Once more, during the War of the Spanish Succession, the Palatinate was despoiled. But, in this instance, the greatest general the world ever saw, taught, not only the French, but the people of Europe, that France was not invincible. To Marlborough belongs the credit of making Britain feared by the sovereigns of the continent, and showing the oppressed that there they might find an asylum. During the time when he was all-powerful in England, was passed the Naturalization Act under which refugees from France and other countries found a home in England or its colonies.

In the spring of 1708, fifty-two Palatines, led by their Lutheran minister, Joshua Kockerthal, landed in England, and petitioned to be sent to America. The Board of Trade recommended "that they be settled on the Hudson River, in the Province of New York, where they may be useful, particularly in the production of naval stores, and as a frontier against the French and Indians." It was further recommended "that they be given agricultural tools and be sent out with Lord Lovelace, the recently appointed Governor of New York." They arrived there in due time and were located at Quassaick Creek, just where the City of Newburg now stands, a name which is probably a perpetuation of the name of the then reigning house of Newburg of the Palatinate.

About May, 1709, large numbers of people came down the Rhine to Rotterdam on their way to London. They came in such numbers and so penniless that the people of Rotterdam were put to straits to supply them with the necessities of life.

The British ministry consented to receive 5,000 of them, and to provide means for their transportation. Others followed rapidly, and by June the number in London reached 7,000. There was apparently no cessation to the stream of people. The English became alarmed. Queen Anne and the Government tried to stop them. Men were sent to Holland and up the Rhine to turn them back. The Elector Palatine, John William, tried to keep his subjects. All these efforts were in a measure unavailing, and not until October, when the number in England had reached about 15,000 did this strange emigration cease.

Why so large a number of people, devotedly attached by nature to their homes, should leave their country to seek new domiciles—they scarcely knew where—is a question that historians have tried to answer. Few migrations parallel it in the history of civilization. It is conceded that it was not due to any single cause, but to a coincidence of causes. The events in the history of Europe just touched upon, throw some light upon the reasons for this peculiar movement. The persistent religious persecution; the despoiling of their country by the French; the remarkably severe winter just passed, all combined to weaken

the ties that bound the Palatine to the Fatherland ; while from beyond seas came the encouraging messages of compatriots who had already established happy homes in America. At this very juncture when all seemed so hopeless in the Palatinate, devastated as it was by war and winter, the land-holding proprietors who were seeking to people America, showed extraordinary zeal and activity ; and assisted by their agents in Germany convinced the Palatines that better things awaited them under the British flag across the Atlantic. Till now there had been no escape from oppression, however severe. But Marlborough had made England respected on the Continent ; Marlborough had made England loved in the Palatinate ; and when in 1709 the Naturalization Act was passed by the English Parliament, it came as an invitation to the helpless Palatines, and they responded by a migration unique in the history of nations.

The question that now confronted the Queen, the ministry, and, in fact, the best men of the Kingdom was what to do with this large addition to the population. It was a new problem ! It was fortunate for these poor people that their general demeanor and their devotion to the Protestant religion had enlisted the active personal sympathy of not only "Good Queen Anne," and the mighty Marlborough, but also of the cultured Sunderland, of the cautious Godolphin, and of the fearless and the broad-minded Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury. For their present subsistence the Queen allowed them nine pence a day, and she ordered army tents to be supplied to them from the Tower. Warehouses not in use were given over by their owners as shelters. By the command of the Queen collections were taken up for their benefit in the churches throughout the land. After some days' deliberations, the Board of Trade resolved to settle some of the Palatines within the Kingdom. Accordingly a bounty of £5 a head was offered to parishes that would receive and settle the foreigners. While many were accepted on these terms because they were clever artisans, and, doubtless, became in a generation or two absorbed in the English population,—a large number of those thus accepted merely because of the bounty were soon virtually compelled to return to Blackheath. An attempt to settle 600 in the Scilly Islands resulted in failure, costing nearly £1,500. A contract to place 500 on Barbadoes in the West Indies was apparently not carried out. Ireland absorbed 3,800 of them who formed prosperous settlements in Munster. The Carolinas received 100 families. Death claimed 1,000 on Blackheath ; about 800 were returned to their homes ; and many enlisted in the English army. While they thus appeared as clay in the potter's hand, there is no doubt that the unanimous desire of these exiled people was to reach America.

And strangely enough a complete solution to the problem was not to be given by the consensus of the intelligence and Chris-

MAP OF THE PROVINCE OF NEW YORK AND PART OF CANADA IN 1784

Showing Palatine Settlements

0 10 20 30 40 50 60

Scale of Miles

Township No. 1, now Charlottenburg.

- No. 2 " Cornwall.
- " 3 " Osnabruck.
- " 4 " Williamsburg.
- " 5 " Matilda.
- " 6 " Edwardsburg.
- " 7 " Augusta.
- " 8 " Elizabethtown.

Tps from Cataraqui

No. 1. Kingston.

2. Ernestown.

3. Fredericksburg.

4. Adolphustown.



tian devotion of England. It so happened that about this time the four Mohawk chiefs that form the subject of one of Addison's pleasantest papers were in London under the guidance of Peter Schuyler and Col. Nicholson; and in their sight-seeing tour they were taken to see the foreigners at Blackheath.

Touched by their misery but more probably eager to appear generous, they invited the Palatines to America, and gave the Queen a grant of land on the Schoharie for their benefit.

The idea of sending them to America was favored by Robert Hunter who was coming out as Governor of New York. Ten ships with 3,200 Palatines on board set sail in March, 1710; nine of them reached New York in June and July, with a loss of 470 lives. One ship was wrecked on Long Island. This incident gave rise to the legend that the ship, lured on shore by false beacons, was robbed and burnt by pirates and all on board killed. A light is said to be sometimes seen from the eastern part of the Island, which, from its fancied resemblance to a burning ship is called the Palatine light or the Palatine ship. This furnished Whittier a theme for one of his poems:—

“ Leagues north, as fly the gull and auk,
Point Judith watches with eye of hawk;
Leagues south thy beacon flames, Montauk !

There, circling ever their narrow range,
Quaint tradition and legend strange
Live on unchallenged, and know no change.

And old men mending their nets of twine,
Talk together of dream and sign,
Talk of the lost ship Palatine,—

The ship that a hundred years before,
Freighted deep with its goodly store,
In the gales of the equinox went ashore.

The eager islanders one by one
Counted the shots of her signal gun,
And heard the crash when she drove right on !

Into the teeth of death she sped ;
(May God forgive the hands that fed
The false lights over the rocky head !)

* * * * *

Down swooped the wreckers, like birds of prey
Tearing the heart of the ship away,
And the dead had never a word to say.

And then, with ghastly shimmer and shine
Over the rocks and the seething brine,
They burned the wreck of the Palatine !

But the year went round, and when once more
Along their foam-white curves of shore
They heard the line-storm rave and roar,

Behold ! again, with shimmer and shine,
Over the rocks and the seething brine,
The flaming wreck of the Palatine.

Do the elements subtle reflections give ?
Do pictures of all ages live
On Nature's infinite negative,

Which, half in sport, in malice half,
She shows at times, with shudder or laugh,
Phantom and shadow in photograph ?

For still, on many a moonless night,
From Kingston Head and from Montauk light
The spectre kindles and burns in sight.

Now low and dim, now clear and higher
Leaps up the terrible Ghost of Fire,
Then, slowly sinking, the flames expire.

And the wise Sound skippers, though skies be fine,
Reef their sails when they see the sign
Of the blazing wreck of the Palatine !

Before the various vicissitudes of fortune that befel the newcomers in America are recounted a quotation from an admirable history of "The German Exodus to England" by Mr. F. R. Diffenderfer, of Lancaster, Pa., will form a fitting close to their history in England. "From first to last and during every stage of its progress, this remarkable episode proved a very costly affair to the British Government. The records are still accessible, and from them we learn the total cost was £135,775. Here we have more than half a million dollars, paid out at a period when England was not so rich as she is now, and at a time too when she was engaged in costly foreign wars, and when money was worth much more than it is to-day. * * * All Germans, and more especially we Americans of German origin, owe a heavy debt of gratitude to Great Britain, the Government as well as her individual citizens for what they did for those forlorn and distressed Palatines." It is exceedingly gratifying to find a citizen of the United States giving due credit to the power that expended men and treasure to elevate and free the people of all countries.

It was from this New York colony that the German U.E. Loyalists of the counties of Dundas and Stormont are descended. There were some additions to the colony from Germany from this time till 1774, but they were of an individual character. No U. E. Loyalists from any other German source ever came to these counties. It has been the prevalent error both of historians

and of the people to believe that the founders of these countie were the descendants of the Hollanders who were the original owners of New Netherlands (now New York). There is scarcely a name of Dutch origin on the roll of the King's Royal Regiment of New York. In fact, nearly all the Hollanders of the Hudson were rebels.

The survivors of the Atlantic voyage were domiciled at Nuttan Island for five months, until lands could be surveyed for them. Before they left for their new homes eighty-four orphan children were apprenticed to the people of New York. It was the intention of Gov. Hunter to employ the Palatines in producing tar from the pine for the use of the British navy. There was very little pine near the Schoharie and the Mohawk, so the governor bought 6000 acres of land from Robert Livingstone on the east side of the Hudson river and placed some of the refugees there, and some on the west side on 600 acres of crown lands—possibly because both these sites were nearer New York. Huts were built and next spring some commenced the production of tar, while 105, or one-sixth of the levy from the whole province, enlisted for service against the French in Canada. The invasion was a failure owing to the loss of the British fleet under Sir Hovenden Walker in the Gulf of St. Lawrence; consequently the land troops did not march beyond Albany.

During the summer the Palatines began to murmur, and after a time quit work. They had got the idea that they were to be made slaves and were not to be allowed to till the soil. Their excuses were, bad food, poor clothing, and no pay for their military service. Moreover they found that the land was unfit for cultivation. Governor Hunter came and pacified them; they agreed to fulfil the contract they had entered into. He had no sooner gone than the discontent manifested itself more plainly than ever. Hunter returned, sent for troops from Albany and disarmed the few that had arms. Under fear they returned to work and continued at it till winter. By the next spring the Governor, who had expended his private fortune in the mistaken idea that tar in paying quantities could be made from the northern pine, found that the government in England, now under Harley and St. John, would not countenance the projects of their predecessors nor recoup him for his expenditure of over £20,000. There was nothing to do but to abandon the tar project. The Palatines were informed that they would have to shift for themselves, the Governor advising that they seek employment with farmers in New York and New Jersey to support their families until they be recalled to fulfil their contract. They were not to be allowed to remove to any other province unless they wished to be treated as deserters—brought back and imprisoned. Notwithstanding these orders only a few stayed on the Livingstone manor. Thirty families moved south on some land they pur-

chased in fee from Henry Beekman. There they founded the town of Rhinebeck which bears that name to-day. A few went to the "West Camp," the name of the settlement on the west side of the Hudson. The greater portion had their hearts set on the lands of the Schoharie, granted to them by Queen Anne. They waited patiently to hear from the seven deputies they had despatched secretly to look for lands there, to make arrangements with the Indians and to find out the best means of getting to what they called their "promised land." The report was favorable, so a small party in the winter of 1712-13 stole away and arrived in Schoharie, where they were to experience hardships and annoyances almost equal to those they had known in the Fatherland. Without food or shelter they must have perished but for the kindness of the Dutch at Albany and of the Indians who showed them where to find edible roots. In the spring a second party of about 100 families joined them. No sooner had they arrived in the valley than the Governor, soured by the failure of his pet theory, for which the Palatines were in no way to blame, ordered them not to settle upon the land. From necessity they refused to obey. Then commenced the long fight with Schuyler, Livingstone, Wileman and Vroman, the large landholders at Albany. For ten years the fight went on. Some bought their land, others became tenants and some moved to adjacent lands on the Mohawk.

Since 1710 the emigrants from Germany had been going to Pennsylvania, no doubt because of the unfavorable reports from the New York colonies. In 1722, Sir William Keith, Governor of Pennsylvania, accompanied Governor Burnett, of New York, to Albany to meet the Indians in a great council. While there Governor Keith heard of the dissatisfaction of the Palatines. He knew their value as colonists and, being compassionate as well as politic, he invited all to settle on grants beside their German countrymen in Pennsylvania, where they would be accorded "freedom and justice." Fully two-thirds accepted the offer. This was their third migration. Is it any wonder that 175,000 Germans of Pennsylvania, half the population in 1775, remained neutral or took the rebel side? It may be put down as one of the mistakes of the British that they did not cultivate by kindly acts the friendship of those German settlers, and furnish them leaders in whom both Briton and German would have confidence. This would have been comparatively easy, as subsequent events have proved. Many years after the struggle was over, hundreds of Germans in Pennsylvania, after a trial of republican government, found homes in Upper Canada, where they could enjoy the blessing of British institutions.

But how fared those who remained on the Schoharie and the Mohawk? For nearly forty years they were unmolested. Only those who know something of the thrift and energy of their

descendants in Eastern Ontario along the St. Lawrence, can form any idea of the progress made by their ancestors in the Mohawk Valley. Situated on the rich alluvial flats, the finest and most fertile lands in the Province, they soon became rich and prosperous. The gently sloping hills and winding river formed a picturesque scene that must have reminded them of their old home on the Rhine.

But the spoiler of their vine-clad cottage in the Palatinate, finds them even in the Valley of the Hudson. England and France were soon to engage in the final struggle for the possession of this continent. In November, 1757, Belletre with his French and Indians swept through the valley, and burned every barn and house on the north side of the Mohawk. The majority of the settlers saved their lives by crossing the river and entering the fort, but 40 were killed and more than 100 carried away as prisoners. The south side was visited next year by another war party. In this raid fewer were killed but the destruction of property was as great.

It was fortunate for Britain that a man of the ability and integrity of Sir William Johnson lived on the Mohawk. He secured and retained the good will and devotion not only of the Indians but also of the Palatines.

After Canada was taken by the British, quietness and happiness reigned on the Mohawk for twelve years. But there were signs of the coming storm that was to devastate this beautiful valley, and again drive the Palatines from their homes when the fortune of war went against them.

United States writers with characteristic unfairness have hinted that if he had lived, Sir William would have sided with the rebels. Sabine hints that he committed suicide rather than take the Loyalist side. It was wholly due to Sir William that Northern New York produced more Loyalists than any other similar section in the thirteen colonies. Again, it may be said that it was owing to the apathy of his son, Sir John, in the early days of the struggle, that the rebels gained an advantage around Albany, that was never recovered.

The Palatines were divided in their opinions but the majority were loyal. For years the enemies of Britain were busy sowing the seeds of dissension among them. A few years previous to the war, Sir William settled on his estate about 500 Scotch emigrants, a large number of whom were Roman Catholics of the Clan MacDonell. The enemies of Sir William went among the Palatines and told them that it was the intention to use the Highlanders and the Indians to drive them from their lands. To some of the Palatines anyone not of the Reformed faith was hateful; and by these the stories were believed, because the Highlanders when appearing in public, wore the full Highland dress, including dirk, pistols, and claymore. Many meetings

were held, yet little impression was made by the rebel emissaries in the settlements. The leaders of the Loyalists must be silenced. A bold stroke was resolved upon. In December, 1775, Philip Schuyler with 4,000 New England troops was sent to disarm the Loyalists on the Mohawk, and to exact assurances of neutrality from Sir John Johnson and his friends. Sir John granted everything; arms were given up, and he agreed not to leave the county if his property and that of his friends were not touched. Some Palatines and Highlanders were taken as hostages and sent to Connecticut. Although Schuyler got all he asked for, still the rebels must be fed in a way that would not cost them anything. Under pretence that all arms were not given up since the Highlanders kept their dirks, he declared the agreement broken and gave free license to his followers to plunder. The cattle, horses, pigs and poultry needed, belonging to the Loyalists, were taken; the church was looted, the vault containing the remains of Sir William Johnson broken open and his lead casket stolen and melted into bullets. For this Schuyler received the thanks of Congress

Thus in direct violation of a solemn agreement was the destruction of property on the Mohawk begun by the rebels. Could the authors of such outrages expect any mercy from Sir John Johnson, from John Butler and his son, Walter Butler, and their followers when they swept down on this valley again and again during the war, when they returned to their old homes simply to despoil the spoilers now in possession?

Sir John, after being subjected to petty annoyances all winter, heard from his friends in Albany that Schuyler intended to release him from his parole, and at the same time take him prisoner. Losing no time, he hurriedly buried his papers; and, trusting to a negro servant to bury his plate, gathered about 200 followers and started by an unfrequented route to Montreal. They arrived there during the last week of June, the day after the city, recently evacuated by the rebel invaders, was entered by Sir Guy Carleton. On the journey they had suffered severely from hunger, as they could not in their haste prepare supplies for nineteen days; and so their principal food had been leeks and the young leaves of the beech. During the last days of the toilsome march many, from exhaustion, fell by the way; the Indians of Caughnawaga were sent out to the rescue. All were brought in safe to Montreal.

Properly to understand the hardships of the Loyalists on the Mohawk it should be borne in mind that they knew of no safe means of escape. On the north, all Canada, except Quebec, was in possession of the rebels; the continental armies controlled the old frequented highways leading to the British headquarters to the south. Imprisonment or death from hunger in the forest

was the only alternative for all that would not forsake their allegiance to their King.

As soon as Sir John arrived in Montreal, scouts were sent out to the Mohawk to show the way to those who wished to come to Montreal and the British posts of Chambly and Ile-aux-Noix, on the Richelieu.



SIR JOHN JOHNSON.

On July 7th Sir John Johnson was granted the privilege of raising a battalion from among his followers and the Loyalists around Johnstown on the Mohawk. This battalion was called the "King's Royal Regiment of New York," or "The Royal Yorkers," or "Royal Greens." Recruiting went on, and in the fall the battalion was complete. In 1780 another battalion was formed. A very large number, in fact the majority of each of these battalions, were Palatines. Butler's Rangers, Jessup's Rangers and Rogers' Rangers also contained not a few Palatines. A very moderate estimate places the number of Palatines who served in the various corps and who settled in Dundas and adjoining counties at about 600. This does not include those refugees unfit for service, or those who would not enlist, or those who came here after the peace. It is an estimate of the able-bodied soldiers who survived the various campaigns of six years' border warfare and garrison duty at the several posts. How many lost their lives in the hazardous enterprises that the corps took part in, or how many died in prison or were hanged

as spies, is not known ; but the number must have been considerable.

Most of the officers were English or Scotch. This is accounted for by the fact that the Highlanders who had recently settled on the Mohawk had, before emigrating, seen active service in various grades in the British army. The Palatines had had no such military training.

In the spring of 1784 the several regiments were settled upon the lands allotted to them along the banks of the St. Lawrence, from Charlottenburg in Glengarry to the Bay of Quinte. The future homes of these vigorous pioneers were not determined by chance. The Highlanders longed for a Highland settlement. The Scotch Presbyterians and the Palatine Lutherans and Palatine Presbyterians asked to be placed in separate communities where they might enjoy the consolations of their own religion. Accordingly in acceding to this petition the authorities with a wonderful foresight so arranged the several conflicting interests of nationality and religion that the utmost harmony has prevailed. The Highland Roman Catholics were placed farthest east beside their French co-religionists ; west of them the Scotch Presbyterians ; then the Palatines—some Lutherans, some Presbyterians, speaking a different language and forming a barrier between the English to the west and the Scotch and French to the east. Thus was laid the foundation of the Ontario that was yet to be, the common bond being the love of British institutions, which is as strong to-day in their descendants as it was in those who risked everything for a "United Empire" so that Britain should be the controlling power in America.

The Palatines were not novices at clearing away the forest and bringing the land quickly under cultivation. If they had readily become the most serviceable and reliable of soldiers ; if cut off from home and family, they had under Sir John Johnson and the Butlers for seven years held the rebels at bay in Central New York and swept the country in raid after raid from Oswego to the borders of Pennsylvania—yet now they showed that they had not forgotten the arts of peace. They returned to the implements of husbandry and won in their new homes victories not less splendid than their triumphs amid the ruins of their old homes. They were aided for two years by supplies from the government and in the third year were not only self-sustaining but actually had grain for export. Although settled in the wilderness far from the centres of population, they knew something of the advantages of older settlements. To acquire such advantages as soon as possible was their aim from the beginning.

It is worthy of note that the first Protestant church in the Province of Canada was built by the Lutheran Palatines on the banks of the St. Lawrence about three miles below the present village of Morrisburg. It was commenced in 1789 and finished

the next year. The first pastor was Rev. Samuel Schwerdfeger, who along with his family was imprisoned by the rebels for his persistence in exhorting his flock on the Mohawk to retain their allegiance to their king.

To another paper must be left the rest of the story of the hardy Palatines, now after four migrations, hewing new homes for themselves out of the "primeval forests" of North America. The growth of the settlement, the individual experiences, the persistent and effective defence of their new homes against their invading enemy in 1813, their wise and loyal efforts for constitutional reform in 1837, all form important chapters in the development of that happy, prosperous, progressive and intelligent people that now enjoy and prize the privileges so dearly bought by their ancestors more than a hundred years ago.

In conclusion, I wish to refer to some statements made recently about the U. E. Loyalists. An article on "The Loyalists of the American Revolution," appeared in the *Quarterly Review* for October, 1898, and received notice in an annual publication of the library of our Provincial University. The editors of this publication are the Librarian and the Professor of History.

Herein the statement is made that the U. E. Loyalists were "drawn from the official, professional and commercial classes" and that they were a "melancholy procession of 'weeping pilgrims'." To say that position or wealth or profession or any other selfish motive, determined the choice of the Loyalists is far from the truth, and we as a society should not allow it to go unchallenged. It was principle, not place, that caused their adherence to the old order of things. Loyalists were found among all classes, all occupations, all denominations, and all nationalities represented in the colonies.

To refute the charge that it was the classes that remained loyal, your attention is directed to the Germans, Scotch, English and Irish of New York who were prosperous farmers and artisans on the Mohawk and who became in a short time again the prosperous farmers and artisans of the St. Lawrence and the Bay of Quinte. Moreover the U. E. Loyalists were not a "melancholy procession of 'weeping pilgrims'," but a determined band of the most stout-hearted, upright, incorruptible people of the provinces, conscious of the righteousness of their choice, and relying on a faith in themselves that no adversity of fortune could shake. Does anyone, acquainted with the history of the country, believe that a nation like Canada had as a foundation "melancholy, weeping pilgrims"? We do not hope for American writers to say anything very praiseworthy of the U. E. Loyalists, but from Canadians, holding prominent positions, which add effectiveness and respect to their opinion, we do expect that they will, to say the least, be fair.

The German U.E. Loyalists of the County of Dundas, Ontario.—Part II.

BY ALEXANDER CLARK CASSELMAN, TORONTO.

In the first paper on the German U.E. Loyalists of the County of Dundas, I described the exodus of their ancestors from the Palatinate in 1710, their stay in England, their voyage to America, their settlement in the province of New York along the banks of the Hudson River, their secret migration to Schoharie, their trouble with the large-acred proprietors, their flight to Canada, and their enlistment in the King's Royal Regiment of New York, under Sir John Johnson. The disbandment of that regiment and the selection of their farms by lot at New Johnstown—now Cornwall—and their occupying these farms along the northern bank of the St. Lawrence have been briefly noticed. I now turn to a narration of their experiences in their new homes.

When the Loyalists went to settle upon their land grants, they were given by the Government provisions and implements absolutely necessary to clear away the forest, build their houses, and put in their gift of seed grain. Clothing material and blankets had to be served out to them, as very little more than the clothing on their backs could be brought by their families from their old homes.

In October, 1784, a muster of the settlers was held to enable the Government to learn how much progress had been made towards a permanent settlement, and to find out the quantity of necessary supplies required by each settlement.

By this muster of the disbanded troops of the King's Royal Regiment of New York, we find the following returns from the townships settled by the German Palatines :—

	Men	Women	Children	Servants	Acres Cleared.
Township No. 2 (Cornwall)....	215	87	214	1	101½
“ “ 3 (Osnabruck)..	50	7	14	4	30
“ “ 4 (Williamsburg) 93	33	76	1		101¾
“ “ 5 (Matilda).....	75	33	64	5	56½
	433	160	368	11	289¾

The townships of Cornwall and Osnabruck are front or river townships in the County of Stormont, the other two are the front townships of the County of Dundas. I have included the two former townships because the greater number of the first settlers in them were German. Williamsburg and Matilda were wholly German. That in the short space of three months these early settlers had built habitations for themselves and cleared, as we see from the returns, about two-thirds of an acre of land for

each man is a remarkable record of their energy, activity and earnestness. Anyone acquainted with the heavy hardwood timber of the virgin forest along the banks of the St. Lawrence will say there were few idle moments for those able to work. It must be borne in mind that an axe of a very clumsy pattern, and often of very poor material, was the principal implement, and that the rolling together of the timber, or logging, was done in most cases without the aid of horses. But these settlers were once farmers on the banks of the Mohawk, and had laid down the axe and the reaping hook of the husbandman for the sword and the musket of the soldier. They now returned to their former occupations, to lay the foundation of an empire north of the St. Lawrence as readily as they tried to preserve for the king those more populous portions south of that river.

To depict the home life of these people is not necessary. It was exceedingly simple—from necessity; and if they were not always comfortable they were happy, and were cheered by the prospect that their industry would in time bring them consolation. The same story of conquering the forest may be told of every U. E. Loyalist settlement in Canada. In the whole history of the colonization of a country can anything be more sublime than the soldier-farmers winning homes for themselves against the giants of the forest and the rigorousness of a severe climate? The thought that should fill each breast with pride at this time is that our ancestors accomplished this with a cheerfulness and enthusiasm that should be the guiding light—the inspiration of the people of Canada for all time.

Active as they were in the duties and labors of their new homes they were not less interested in the affairs of the commonwealth. In 1774 the British Parliament passed the Quebec Act. This was specially framed to suit the inhabitants of French origin in the newly-acquired colony of Canada. When the Loyalists settled in Canada in 1784 the authority for the government of the new subjects was vested in this Act. As the Act had been intended only for the French, it was partly inoperative with respect to the Loyalists along the St. Lawrence. The law was administered by military officers and was a kind of military rule from which all the harshness, usually implied thereby, was excluded. The executive officer of the county of Dundas was Captain Richard Duncan, a Scotchman, who before the war was for five years an ensign in the 55th Regiment. His home was at Mariatown, now a small collection of houses about a mile west of the present village of Morrisburg. It was founded by Capt. Duncan and named in honor of his daughter, Maria, who was said to be the most beautiful woman in the new settlement. From all that I can learn of Judge Duncan, as he was called, he was a kind-hearted and generous man, who dealt out the law of

right and justice, although not strictly in accordance with the existing constitution.

As the German settlers were deeply religious and generally industrious no serious cases of dispute arose. They had trial by jury, with sheriff and judge, and Mr. Croil in "Dundas" says that Mr. Richard Loucks, in whose tavern the court was held, had an account not only against the grand jury for liquor used in the court room, but also against the judge for brandy furnished for a supper given by him to the jurymen. Notwithstanding the congeniality of judge and jury, some penalties were inflicted for misdemeanors. Minor offences were atoned for in the pillory, which adjoined the inn of Loucks. Extreme offences were punished by banishment to the United States! This, of course, was considered unusually severe and ranked next to the sentence of death.

Although the geniality and generosity of the judge were unbounded, it will be readily understood that the sturdy Loyalists, familiar as they were with representative institutions in the colony of New York, would soon strive for a more substantial form of government than that dispensed by a military officer, however efficient he might be.

Just here allow me to correct an impression that many, even in Canada, have regarding the U. E. Loyalists. Their detractors say, because they risked their lives and all their worldly belongings for the sake of British connection and British supremacy, that they approved all the acts of George III. in relation to America, that their loyalty was a blind fidelity to flag and sovereign. This is one of the calumnies under which they labored. But if the descendants of their bitterest enemies have not wholly vindicated the Loyalists' action, they have materially softened their imputations. Among the Loyalists were many men, men of high ideals, of liberal culture and of the highest character who were the bitterest opponents of the oppressive and unwise acts of George III. Although they deplored the actions of the king they did not consider rebellion the proper means to rectify any existing error that the British had made with respect to them. This was the noble distinction between the Loyalists and the rebels. The Loyalists believed that constitutional means would furnish a more meritorious and more lasting method for redress of grievances than a resort to arms. There is no one but will admit that it required more courage to take up arms in defence of a government whose acts you cannot approve than to be a rebel. In a little more than fifty years in their new home the Loyalists had to face similar difficulties and similar oppression, and I am proud to say that they then resisted a resort to arms as strongly as when they had taken up arms in a righteous cause, that by the fortunes of war was destined to drive them from their comfortable homes to seek new ones in the unbroken wilderness.

True to those principles of constitutional redress of grievances,

the Loyalists of the County of Dundas, pointed out the civil difficulties under which they labored and greatly influenced the legislation for the colony. In the state papers of this time we find in a petition of Sir John Johnson and other Loyalist subscribers to the king, dated April 11, 1785, several suggestions that were afterwards embodied in the Constitutional Act of 1791. After pointing out the hardships involved in the land tenure under the Quebec Act, they propose: (1) A district from Point au Baudet (Beaudette) westward, distinct from the province of Quebec; (2) The division of the district into counties with Cataraqui (now Kingston) as the metropolis. The petition closes with these words, "Your petitioners implore your Majesty that the blessing of British laws and British government and an exemption from the French tenures may be extended to the aforesaid settlements."

The British officials were slow to move and other petitions followed the next year. One was sent from New Johnstown (Cornwall) dated Dec. 2, 1786; one from New Oswegatchie (Prescott) dated Nov. 16, 1786, and one from Cataraqui (Kingston).

In the following year, on June 13, another petition was forwarded to the British Government, praying for the same as in the last petitions, and in addition: 1. For English tenure of lands. 2. For assistance in establishing churches of England and Scotland. 3. For assistance to establish a school in each district. 4. For a prohibition of pot and pearl ashes from Vermont as leading to an illicit trade with the United States, and for a bounty on these articles and hemp. 5. For a loan of three months' provisions. 6. For clothing to the distressed. 7. For the speedy running of the division lines of the townships. 8. For a post road from Montreal to Cataraqui, and for post offices at New Johnstown, New Oswegatchie and Cataraqui. 9. For a passage from the head of the Bay of Quinté, through to Lake Huron for the Indian trade. 10. That three places may be pitched upon between River Baudet and Cataraqui to receive grain from the settlers. 11. That the commissioners on claims would visit New Johnstown, New Oswegatchie and Cataraqui, the general poverty of the settlers preventing them from pressing their claims at Montreal and Quebec. 12. That the use of canal locks be confirmed to them and that in respect to lands they be put on an equal footing with the 84th Regiment.

It should be understood that nearly all the population of what is now Ontario was east of what is now Belleville, except a small settlement at Niagara. If the proper significance is attached to these petitions, there is thrown on the thoughts and character of the people, a side light that beautifully illumines this page of our history. They show that the people had in them the instincts of popular government and were not the serfs of any government or king. They prove that the grand principle they had fought for was right. Patience and pressure by

constitutional methods will bring about better results than a resort to arms. The answer to these petitions was the Constitutional Act of 1791. This Act gave to Upper Canada a more liberal and popular form of government than possessed by England at the time, and fully as liberal as that in any of the boasted democracies of the United States. There were some clauses in this Act that caused a great deal of trouble in after years, notably the provision for the clergy, and the creation of an irresponsible upper chamber. We see from these petitions that the word Protestant in the Act meant Church of Scotland, as well as Church of England. With all the defects in the Act, as we see it now, considering the state of the country, and the absence of precedents, it would not be easy to suggest much improvement. The qualification for voters was extremely liberal. They must be British subjects of the full age of 21 years, and possessed of lands of the yearly value of forty shillings sterling or upwards within the county. In towns the yearly value for qualification was five pounds.

Under the Constitutional Act the inhabitants of the County of Dundas were happy. Their industry was amply rewarded by good crops from lands that are as suited to mixed farming as any on the continent. Mills for grinding grain and sawing lumber by power from water and wind were built at convenient places on the river bank. Although there were no factories for making cloth from wool, flax, and hemp until many years after the beginning of the century, this deficiency was supplied by the handiwork of the women, who, with the rudest hand tools, carded, spun, and wove the various materials into substantial cloth for clothing and household uses. More than one member attended the sessions of the Legislature at Newark and York in a suit of clothes wholly manufactured in his own home.

The rural simplicity and quietness of the county was somewhat disturbed during the War of 1812-15. Many of the inhabitants enlisted in the active colonial corps and took part in the famous actions of that war. The principal duty however of the militia of the County of Dundas was to guard the convoys of boats or wagons passing up the river to supply the forts at Prescott, Kingston, Niagara and York. This was no sinecure as all stores and ammunition had to pass in sight of the United States troops ready to seize them, had they not been securely guarded. Although many were the attempts only on one occasion was the guard surprised and overpowered and the supplies taken. Some of these encounters were desperate, and for the numbers engaged might be dignified by the name of battle.

Mr. Hough, the historian of St. Lawrence County in New York State, says—"The early settlers on the south bank of the river were indebted in an especial manner to their Canadian neighbors for many kindnesses which relieved them from those extremities that settlers of other parts less favorably situated

endured. When the war broke out, each became suspicious of the other. The visits ceased for about a year, and by some means were renewed, but always at night and in secret. There was one Canadian who thought this visiting wrong, and when called upon to sustain the interest to his king, felt the old-time spirit return. Although a very kind-hearted man and strongly attached by ties of friendship to his American neighbors, he sternly refused all renewals of acquaintance, from a sense of duty, and discountenanced it among his neighbors. One evening an inhabitant of the south shore resolved to attempt to conquer this spirit by kindness and boldly visited his house as had been his custom. Finding him absent at a neighbor's, the American followed him, and warmly saluted him with a cordial grasp of the hand, and friendly chiding, for so long and so obstinately withstanding the claims of friendship. This appeal to the heart outweighed the decision of the head, and the salutation was, after a moment's hesitation, returned with a cordiality that showed him sensible of the truth, that man is by nature a social being, and intended to live by the side of his neighbors. Peace was thus declared along this frontier long before the fact was established by diplomatists."

During the three years war the most momentous event in which the Dundas militia bore a part was the battle of Crysler's Farm. In October, 1813, an invading army of the enemy about 10,000 strong assembled at Sackett's Harbor with the intention of taking Kingston and other posts on the river and proceeding to Montreal to co-operate with another army moving against that city by the Lake Champlain route. The season was well advanced before this large army under the command of General James Wilkinson, was prepared to move. Kingston was well guarded, so it was decided to pass it and invest Montreal. They passed down the river in about 300 boats and were not seriously interfered with till the County of Dundas was reached. Here the old soldiers of Sir John Johnson and their sons lined the banks of the river and with their muskets seriously annoyed the invaders in their closely-packed boats. So vexing and worrying had this become that the flotilla had to halt, and a detachment was landed and sent down the north bank to clear the way to insure the safe passage of the boats. This so checked the advance of the enemy that Col. Morrison, with a corps of observation of 750 men from Kingston had time to overtake them at Lot No. 1 in the township of Williamsburg. Here on Nov. 11th, 1813, the British and Canadians, assisted by the Dundas Militia, all under the command of Morrison, aided by Col. Harvey, in all about 1,200 men, attacked the rear guard of Wilkinson's army of about 5,000 men, under General Boyd, well-equipped with cavalry and cannon, and utterly defeated it. The loss of the Americans, according to their despatch, was 102 killed and 237 wounded. The loss of the British and Canadians was 24 killed

and 221 wounded.* This was the best-fought battle of the whole war. The Americans retreated to their own shores and Montreal was saved. The value of this victory was much enhanced by the fact that it was badly needed to revive the spirits of the Canadian people. The whole of the western peninsula had been lost by Procter's defeat at Moraviantown; Niagara and Fort Erie were in the hands of the enemy; and the small army of General Vincent was preparing to withstand a siege at Burlington Heights. York had been twice taken during the year, and a large amount of property destroyed. Thus the fortunes of the British were at the lowest point during the war. The victory of Crysler's Farm restored confidence, and was the beginning of the end. The British government recognized its importance by granting a medal for this victory. The value of this will be understood when it is recalled that medals were granted for only two other engagements during the war, for Detroit and for Chateauguay. The government of the United States was equally cognizant of this victory, for General Wilkinson, their commander, was court-martialed, and General Boyd's services were not retained on the reduction of their army at the close of the war.

The inhabitants of the County of Dundas, every one a soldier, deserve a large share of credit for the victory. They were the first settlers along the river to offer any resistance to the flotilla. They detained the invaders by an organized system that kept the enemy in constant terror. They employed the same tactics by which they spread consternation among the rebels during the revolutionary war. Always invisible, but ever present, they forced the invaders to fight and then defeated them. The highest tribute to the people of Dundas is paid them by Gen. Wilkinson, who says in his despatch:—"The enemy deserve credit for their zeal and intelligence, which the active universal hostility of the male inhabitants of the country enable them to employ to the greatest advantage. Thus while menaced by a respectable force in rear, the coast was lined by musketry in front, at every critical pass of the river, which obliged me to march a detachment and thus impeded my progress."

The British commander also testifies to the zeal which all classes had shown in their endeavors to oppose the threatened invasion. For Sir George Prevost says for the information of His Majesty's Government that "The very great exertions made for the preservation of the Canadas by its population in conjunction

*The British put the American loss at 600 to 700 killed and wounded, and 180 prisoners. (Col. Harvey's letter of 12th Nov. in "*Ten Years of Upper Canada*," by Lady Edgar.) This is a close approximation to the result deduced from the councils of war held by Wilkinson. On Nov. 9th, at Tuttle's Bay, in the township of Matilda, he states he has 7,000 effective troops. On the 12th at Barnhart's Island near Cornwall he states he has only 6,000. Thus in three days the loss was 1,000 men, and as there was only a skirmish at Hoople's Creek near the head of the Long Sault, 800 at least may be credited to the engagement at Crysler's Farm on the 11th, a number equal to two-thirds of the whole British force.

with the small force under my command, may eventually degenerate into indifference for the result of the present contest unless the support from the Mother Country is equal to the magnitude of the stake."

For some years the representatives of the County of Dundas in the parliament of Canada urged the government to erect some memorial column to mark the spot where Canadians and British fell in defence of our country. The most active promoters of late years in this laudable work were our respected president, Mr. H. H. Cook, M.P. for East Simcoe, himself a Dundas boy, born within sight of the battle-ground; Dr. C. E. Hickey, M.P. for Dundas, and his successor, Mr. H. H. Ross. It was the good fortune of Mr. Ross, while representative of the county to see their dream of love and patriotism accomplished. On the 25th of September, 1895, the monument, just completed, was unveiled by John Graham Haggart in presence of a vast crowd of people from the surrounding country. Of the important personages present on this historic occasion, not the least notable were Mr. Samuel Crysler, aged 90, and Mr. George Weaver, aged 91, who heard the roar of battle and saw some of its movements on this same ground 82 years before.

After the close of the war the people returned to their peaceful occupations once more. Then more fiercely than ever commenced that great constitutional struggle between the elected and appointed branches of the Parliament that ended in the Union of Upper and Lower Canada in 1841, and somewhat later in the abolition of irresponsible advisers of the Lieutenant-Governor.

To attempt to outline even the political history of Dundas from the close of the war till 1841 would be tedious. It may be said, however, that for twenty years Dundas sent to Parliament representatives who continually pressed for a better form of government, a government which if prone to do wrong would have less power to inflict harm. Because the people of Dundas so persistently opposed what was called The Family Compact, it must not be understood that they were disloyal or even had the remotest idea of taking up arms to redress grievances. In the whole Eastern district not one was even suspected of committing any treasonable act. Of course it should not be considered a great virtue to be loyal. But since some rashly resorted to arms to enforce their opinions and to sever Canada from Britain, I merely mention the fact. The people of Dundas occupied a strange position which was very different from that of the people of the western portion of the province. In the west were many settlers from the United States who were in their hearts disloyal. Their object was to make Canada a part of the United States, and the surest way to bring this about was to take sides with the constitutional agitators for reform. The treasonable designs of these disloyal persons cemented the old U. E. Loyalists

into one opposing camp whose watchword was British connection. Very different was the situation in the east. None but Loyalists settled there—in fact none but tried Loyalists were allowed to do so. Hence they divided, as communities will on any subject, but it was understood that every Loyalist desired nothing else but British connection, and without fear of being called sympathizers with the United States, they could elect members pledged to use their best endeavors to secure reforms. For four parliaments Dundas sent two members showing that its population was relatively more than some other counties of much greater area. The men that stand out prominently during this period of political strife are Col. John Crysler, Peter Shaver and John Cook. Peter Shaver and John Cook being the joint representatives for three consecutive parliaments. Col. Crysler served for ~~13~~ years, (1808-1824); Peter Shaver for ~~17~~ years, (1824-1841); John Cook, for 15 years, (1836-1844). 20

When the province was invaded at Prescott by sympathizers with the rebels, from the United States, under Von Schoultz, the Dundas militia were soon at the scene of action. Their loss was, four rank and file killed, one lieutenant and five rank and file wounded. The result of this engagement is well-known to all. Not one of the 170 invaders escaped. Nearly 100 were killed and the remainder surrendered prisoners of war. Von Schoultz and others of lesser note were hanged at Kingston. A few of the youthful adherents were pardoned and sent home to the United States, of the remainder a few were imprisoned and the others transported to Van Dieman's Land.

Again, during the Fenian scare, did the militia of Dundas nobly respond to the call for the defence of the country. And at this time (February, 1900) some of its young men are members of each of the contingents on active service in South Africa.

A mere recital of the main facts in the history of even one family would require the space of a whole paper such as this. But I shall conclude with two typical stories of romantic adventure and hardship.

Henry Merkley was a young man living with his father in the valley of the Schoharie, New York, when the revolutionary war broke out. He was known to be a Loyalist; and when he was working in the harvest field, a neighbor, named Young, and his son came over and began talking on the political aspect of the times. Merkley would not declare himself, and we believe, took rather a non-partisan standpoint. This was an act of prudence on his part, as his unwelcome callers were armed with muskets. However, this discretion did not save Merkley. John Young, the son, shot him in the side, but did not kill him; and, when about to finish his murderous work with the butt end of his musket, he was prevented by his father. Soon after this Merkley was put into Schoharie jail. After his wounds were healed he managed to make his escape and reached Niagara.

875-1808
inclusive

817-1820
inclusive

821-1840
inclusive

He at once joined the King's Royal Regiment of New York, and served in the several memorable campaigns with that famous regiment until the close of the war. After its disbandment he settled in Montreal, and subsequently in Williamsburg in the County of Dundas. Here he soon became a prosperous and popular farmer, and took an active part in the civil and military affairs of the country. From 1807 to 1812 he was the representative of the County in the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada. He was an officer of the Dundas militia, and was present at Crysler's Farm, and took part in the several engagements on the St. Lawrence frontier during the war.

When Mr. Merkley was living on his farm in Williamsburg, a beggar came to his door and asked for a meal. The farmer and beggar instantly recognized each other. The last time they met was in the harvest field in Schoharie. The beggar was none other than John Young, who had so nearly taken Mr. Merkley's life some years before, now reduced to the humiliating position of asking alms from the man he so cruelly wronged. The utter abjectness of his position, led him to ask forgiveness for his despicable deed. Mr. Merkley, was not quite so willing to grant the forgiveness, but his Christian spirit overcame his feelings: his former enemy was fed and sent on his way.

The following sketch of one of the U. E. Loyalists of Palatine descent has hardly a parallel among the annals of hardship, adventure, and peril experienced by the first settlers of Canada.

Cl istina Merkley, was the seventeen-year-old daughter of Michael Merkley, a thrifty farmer of Schoharie. Her mother was dead and the affairs of the household and the care of her five-year-old brother, were to a great extent in charge of herself and her sister two years younger. On the day our story begins, her father was away with his niece on a visit to her married sister. As the shades of evening began to fall the two girls became somewhat impatient and their sense of loneliness was increased by the crying of their brother. After a few moments of watching the father and cousin were seen riding swiftly towards the house. The little boy's crying changed to joyous laughter and the three ran out to greet their father. Just as they emerged from the house a volley rang out and the father and cousin dropped from their horses dead. Before they could realize what had happened they were prisoners of a band of Indians. After taking the booty they required, the Indians set the house and buildings on fire and quickly took their departure with their prisoners. To hasten the children's footsteps and to frighten them into silence they were shown the scalps of their father and cousin. The boy, not old enough to know the meaning of such a threat, kept on crying, and between sobs would call out, "I want my father, I want my father!" The threats of the savages and the fearful pleadings of the sisters proving ineffectual, the girls were ordered to go on ahead with

the squaws. They believed they would never see their brother again. His cries ceased, and in a few minutes when his bleeding scalp was dangled before them as a warning, their belief was confirmed.

Who can describe the feelings of these children during the five weeks' march to Niagara! Their physical sufferings were scarcely less severe than their anguish of mind. Exposed to the weather on long marches with insufficient clothing, they were in constant danger but were always saved from the drunken Indians by the Indian women.

After seven weeks of hardship and captivity in the Indian encampment at Niagara, their presence there came to the knowledge of Sir John Johnson. He compelled the Indians to give them up in exchange for some presents. By him they were taken to Montreal, and till the end of the war they lived with his household. In May, 1784, just before the King's Royal Regiment started for their future homes on the banks of the St. Lawrence, Christina married Jacob Ross, a soldier of the first battalion of that famous regiment. Jacob Ross drew land in township No. 2, or Cornwall. Like other Loyalist families they were supplied with the necessaries of life for making a home in the wilderness. But they were without a cow and they had no money to purchase one. As the prospects for getting money from the sale of the produce of a farm that as yet was a forest, seemed rather distant, it was arranged that Mrs. Ross should go to Montreal and seek domestic employment and thereby earn sufficient money to purchase this useful animal. At the end of a year the cow was bought and, meanwhile, the husband had cleared enough land so that some grain and vegetables could be raised. The difficulties incident to making a new home in the wilderness being now overcome, there is little to chronicle besides the routine of others similarly situated.

Mrs. Ross died in 1857 at the great age of 98. She was a member of the German Lutheran church and her last desire that her German Bible and prayer-book be buried with her was gratified.

The descendants of Mrs. Ross in the Counties of Stormont and Dundas, are many. All the honorable professions are represented among her descendants, while some of them have been elected to serve their fellow-citizens in the legislative halls of our country.

One grandson, Samuel Ault, represented Stormont in the parliament of the old province of Canada from 1861 to 1867 and for one term in the parliament of the Dominion. In 1861 Mr. Ault's opponent was no less a personage than John Sandfield Macdonald. Another grandson, John Sylvester Ross, was the representative of Dundas for two terms in the parliament of the old province of Canada and also for two terms in the Dominion parliament. Hugo H. Ross, of Iroquois, son of the preceding, was M.P. for Dundas from 1891 to 1896.

